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MERIDEN
MONOGRAPHS
No 1



A
HISTORICAL
SKETCH
of
MADISON SQUARE

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MERIDEN MONOGRAPHS, No. 1

A Historical Sketch of Madison Square



NEW YORK

1894

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This little book, the result of many months of careful research, is offered to the patrons of the Meriden Britannia Company, in commemoration of its removal from Union to Madison Square. It is hoped that they will find the information as interesting as it has been to the publishers of this Historical Sketch of Madison Square.





MADISON SQUARE.

IN the very heart of the metropolis of the New World is Madison Square; and in all New York there is no other one place so completely identified with the growth of the city as this beautiful pleasance. Even more than this may be said, for it is doubtful if there is any place in the world where the *fin de siècle* civilization in its fullest development can be seen to greater advantage than in this very Madison Square. It has all the gayety and brightness of the famous Place de la Concorde in Paris, without its sad reminiscences. Like Trafalgar Square in London, it has a memorial to a nation's greatest naval hero; likewise it does honor to a brave soldier, and even statesmen have not been forgotten. Its history is like that of Lafayette Square, in Washington city, of which it has been well said to have "undeniably the most interesting history of any locality in the United States." The history of Madison Square is indeed the history of New York city itself.

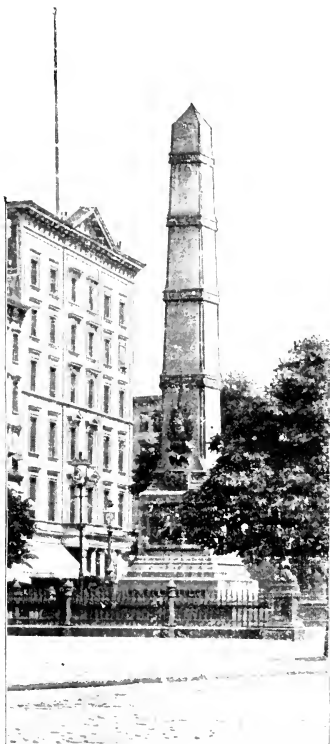
Originally it was conspicuous as a military post, serving as such during the war of 1812; then it became the site of the House of Refuge, and finally

it was beautified and made into a park. These various elements of its history we shall consider in their chronological order.

As early as 1806 a magazine or arsenal was erected by the United States at the junction of the Eastern Post Road, as the highway to Boston was then called,

and the Middle Road, better known in these days as Broadway. The exact site of this building was about where the Worth Monument now stands. It formed one of the series of defenses which included two other arsenals in the lower part of the city, and two forts—one off the Battery, called Southwest Battery, and the other in Hudson River, off Hubert Street, called North Battery.

These arsenals were buildings two or three stories



high, of stone and brick, well constructed, and inclosed by high walls. All that is martial has long since disappeared from this point. Worth's Monument alone preserves to memory the spot that once served to protect the city from an attack from the north. Thus almost a century ago what has since become Madison Square was an important locality in the history of New York.

In 1807 an act was passed by the State Legislature authorizing the appointment of commissioners to regulate and open the streets. De Witt Clinton, who resigned from the United States Senate in 1802 to accept the office of mayor of the city, was then filling that place for a second time.

He named as commissioners Gouverneur Morris, Simeon De Witt, and John Rutherford. To this board New York owes its rectangular system of streets and avenues. They adopted the method of parallel streets across the island, numbering toward the north from Houston Street, where their special labors began. The streets were intersected by avenues one hundred feet wide, extending to the extreme northern limit of the island, twelve of which numbered eastward from First Avenue, which passed "from the west of Bellevue Hospital to the east of Harlem Church." East of First Avenue were four short avenues, designated A, B, C, and D respectively.

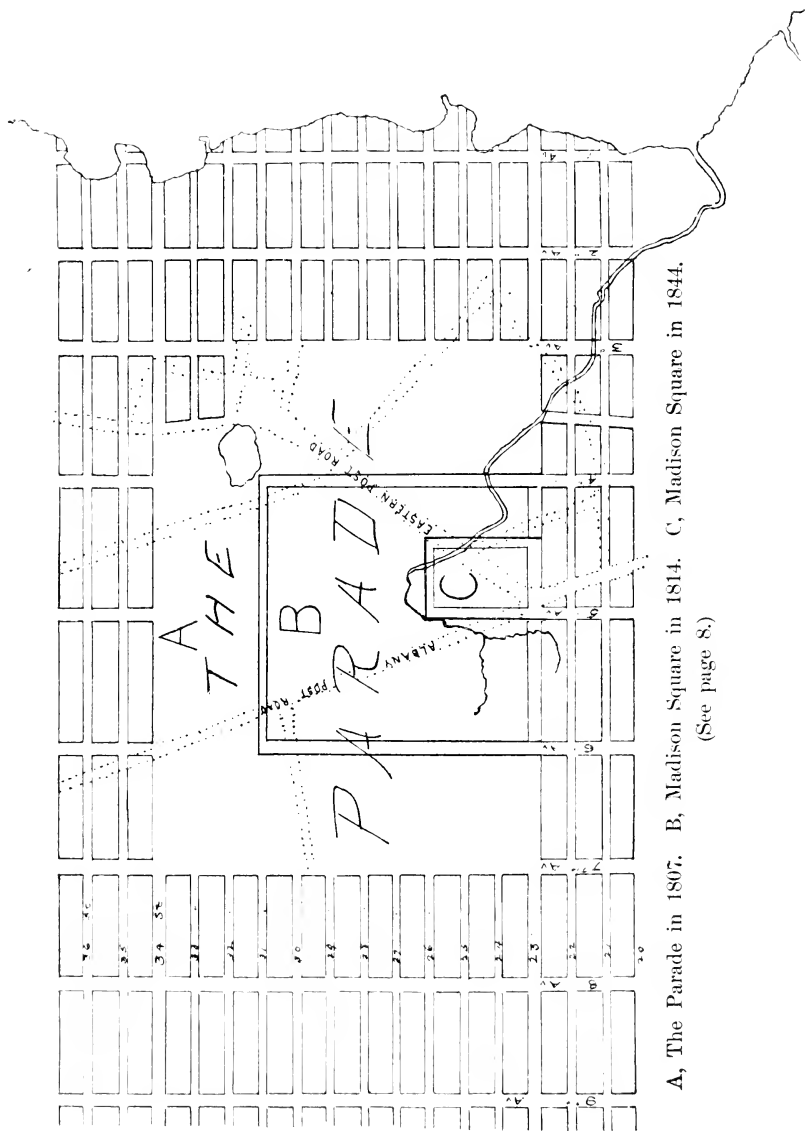
The adjustment of Broadway with the Bloomingdale Road seems to have caused them some trouble, and in a letter written by John Randel, Jr., city surveyor, to the commissioners, we find mention of

that fact. He says: "Between Sailor's Snug Harbor [now Tenth Street] and Love Lane [now Twenty-first Street] were a narrow causeway and perhaps from six to eight frame dwelling houses." By the commissioners' plan "Broadway was to have been straightened at this place by continuing it from the bend at the present Tenth Street northward between Third and Fourth Avenues to Twenty-third Street, where it was lost in 'The Parade.'"

This Parade, according to the same writer, was laid out by the commissioners for military purposes, and contained 238·7 acres, extending from Twenty-third to Thirty-fourth Streets and from Third to Seventh Avenues. Their report was dated March 22, 1811. By a statute of April 15, 1814, this tract was reduced to 89·1 acres, and about this time it received the name of Madison Square, in honor of James Madison, the President of the United States. Finally it was again reduced and given the present size. In its inception we have the germ which later gave rise to Central Park.

Having thus traced part of its early history, we now pass to another phase of its development. It is a curious fact that many of the public squares of New York were originally used as burial places for the unknown dead. The upper part of City Hall Park, where the Court House now stands, was once used for that purpose. A writer on old New York says:

"And the robin, who is no respecter of persons, chirps as joyously upon the sod that hides the quiet dust of the repentant and forgotten felon as on the



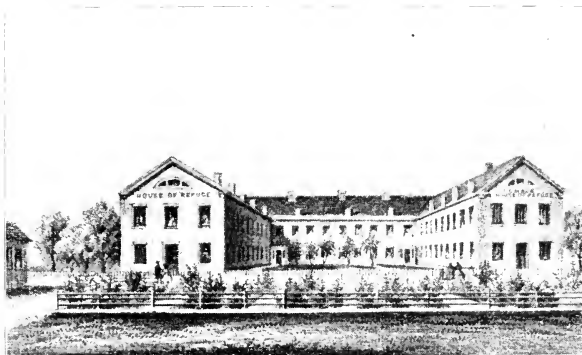
carefully tended grave of the nabob who left his gold behind him when he lay down to rest beneath the aristocratic elms of old St. Paul's."

As the city pushed northward the Potter's Field was removed to Washington Square, and as early as 1810 a part of the Parade Ground, especially that to the east of the arsenal, was used by the city authorities as the last resting place for its castaway dead. Later the block between Forty-ninth and Fiftieth Streets and Lexington and Fourth Avenues was used as a public cemetery until about 1857, when the present location on Ward's Island was selected. Felix Oldboy, in his charming Tour around New York, says of Madison Square :

"Fashion enjoys the lovely little park, but little reckes that it owes its pleasant shade to the tramps and the criminals whose bones lie moldering beneath the grass and flowers."

Meanwhile the Parade Ground remained a broad area of waste land. Subsequent to the War of 1812 all fear of foreign invasion seems to have passed away, and finally, in 1823, the arsenal or barracks, as it was then called, was abandoned. The land became the property of the city, and in 1825 the first House of Refuge was founded in the old building. It began with six boys and three girls. Fire destroyed the building in 1839, and the House of Refuge was removed, in October of that year, to the foot of East Twenty-third Street, where it remained until 1854, when it was again removed to its present site on Randall's Island.

Of this institution a writer in Appletons' Journal says: "The society [for the House of Refuge was managed by the Society for the Reformation of Juvenile Delinquents of the City of New York] began operations on the 1st of January, 1825, in the



old soldiers' barracks, occupied during the War of 1812-'15. The site of the barracks was about one mile from the outskirts of the city and two miles from the City Hall. It is now the heart of the city, forming the charming park known as Madison Square. It was then considered out of town. A lady of the city recollects, when young, being invited to visit the institution. The day was devoted to the object, and she was so fatigued by the jaunt that she was sick for a week in consequence." And this was going from down town to Madison Square.

After the burning of the House of Refuge the Parade Ground seems to have been abandoned to an

unconfined class of boys, for we read that it served "as a skating place in winter and was a source of infinite delight in summer to the throngs of boys that then roamed the streets at will and wallowed in its muddy shallows."

More than one of our present parks have been reclaimed as breathing places on account of their swampy nature rendering them unfit for residential purposes. Conspicuous illustrations of this fact are afforded in Washington, Gramercy, and Madison Squares. Some years ago General Egbert L. Viele, an enthusiast on the subject of parks, and the author of the earliest plan of Central Park, made an elaborate topographical map of New York city, showing the original courses of these ancient streams. We find that one of these nameless streams [it has been called Cedar Creek, according to some persons, but General Viele does not recognize this name] has its origin to the west of the Square, and, after passing along the line of Broadway, turns eastward and skirts the northern end of the park; then passing south, it there broadens into a pond, whence it follows a southeasterly course toward the East River, into which it empties at about Seventeenth Street. In recent years the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, whose beautiful building adorns the southeastern corner of the Square, has used its waters for cleaning and washing.

Meanwhile the city was slowly extending northward. In 1837 the tunnel between Thirty-third and Forty-second Streets was opened. Of this event the

New York Mirror, long edited by Nathaniel P. Willis, says :

“ Philadelphia and Boston are both famous for their lions, their Fairmount Waterworks, and their Mount Auburn Cemetery, but they must now hide their diminished heads for a while until they can get up something to beat the tunnel on Fourth Avenue.”

Five years later water from the Croton River was introduced into the distributing reservoir on Fifth Avenue, between Fortieth and Forty-second Streets. The event was celebrated on October 14, 1842, and, says Mrs. Lamb, “ with an imposing military and civic procession seven miles in length.” George P. Morris, the poet, wrote of this event :

“ Round the aqueducts of story,
As the mists of Lethe throng,
Croton’s waves, in all their glory,
Troop in melody along.
Ever sparkling, bright, and single
Will this rock-ribbed stream appear,
When posterity shall mingle
Like the gathered waters here.”

Let us also glance to the east and the west. Felix Oldboy tells us that Bull’s Head village extended from Second to Fourth Avenues and from Twenty-third to Twenty-seventh Streets. Here was the great cattle mart of the city, and here it had been for twenty years.

On the west was Chelsea village, whose colonial houses reward those whose antiquarian ambitions lead them to search that old quarter. The block

between Twentieth and Twenty-first Streets and Ninth and Tenth Avenues, on which are the buildings of the General Theological Seminary of the Protestant Episcopal Church, preserves the name of Chelsea Square. This block was originally part of the farm of Clement C. Moore, who is best known as the author of

" 'Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the house

Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse."

Rapid transit was introduced in 1832, and horse-cars ran along Fourth Avenue from Prince Street to Murray Hill at intervals of fifteen minutes. A

fare of twenty-five cents was charged. New York was fast becoming a metropolis.



James Harper

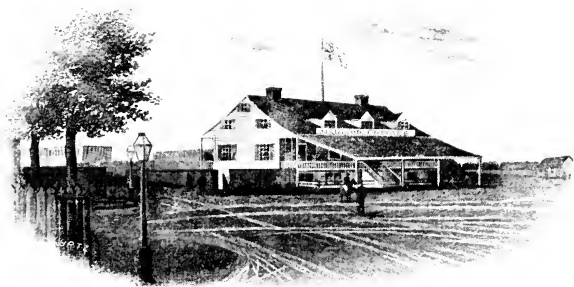
In 1844, James Harper, of the famous publishing firm, was chosen mayor on the Native American ticket, and during his administration commissioners were appointed to acquire the lands forming the Square. Their report was confirmed by the Supreme Court early in May, 1847, and the Square was ordered

opened by the Common Council on the 10th of that month. Its area at that time was 6.84 acres.

Beyond acquiring possession of the property and declaring it open, very little seems to have been done

with it. A contemporaneous Description of the City of New York, published in 1847, says: "Madison and Hamilton Squares, and some other public areas, though laid down in the plan of the city, are not yet arranged and opened." The Mexican War then took place and absorbed the public interest. Later, its outlines were marked by a rude wooden fence, and paths connecting the streets and avenues were laid out.

Of the buildings that surround Madison Square, the first to achieve special interest was Corporal Thompson's Madison Cottage, where, according to Mrs. Van Rensselaer, "at the Sign of the Buckhorn, explained by a huge pair of veritable antlers, the trot-



ting men of the period found frequent refreshment for themselves, if not for their beasts." It was the post tavern used for changing horses and later became a road house. In the New York Herald of May 9, 1847, we find the following reading notice:

"MADISON COTTAGE.—This beautiful place of resort opposite Madison Square, corner of Twenty-third Street and Broadway, is open for the season, and Palmer's omnibuses drive to the door. It is one of the most agreeable spots for an afternoon's lounge in the suburbs of our city. Go and see."

It occupied the site where the Fifth Avenue Hotel now stands. In 1852 it was the chief house in the immediate vicinity.

It soon gave way to Franconi's Hippodrome, which was built by a syndicate of eight American showmen, among whom were Avery Smith, Richard Sands, and Seth B. Howe. The building was of brick, two stories high, and seven hundred feet in circumference. The arena, which was in the center, was uncovered, and here were given chariot races and circus performances. It was opened on May 2, 1853, when over four thousand people were present. For two seasons it continued in favor.

A church followed, and selected the corner of Twenty-fourth Street and Madison Avenue as the site for its home. In 1834, William Adams, a graduate of 1827 at Yale, and at the Andover Theological Seminary in 1830, was called to the charge of the Central Presbyterian Church in Broome Street. His congregation founded the Madison Square Presbyterian Church in 1853, and of which he continued pastor until 1873. For nearly half a century Dr. Adams was one of the leaders of his denomination, and exercised a potent influence over the religious thought of New York city until his death in 1880.

A conspicuous event in the history of Christianity occurred in this church on October 5, 1873. The Evangelical Alliance of the World was gathered at that time in convention in New York, and on Sunday afternoon a communion service was held in which representatives from every denomination and almost every nation on earth took part. So conspicuous a recognition of the unity of Christianity received adverse criticism from certain stricter members of the English Church, especially so as the Dean of Canterbury had participated in the service. Dr. Adams soon published a letter replying to the critics. It silenced all animadversion. In his pastorate he was followed by Dr. William Tucker, who in 1880 was succeeded by the present incumbent, Dr. Charles H. Parkhurst, who has made his influence felt in his determined efforts to suppress venal influences in municipal politics.



M. Adams

"The rapid improvements," says Mrs. Lamb, "in Fifth Avenue above Madison Square date from the completion of the Madison Square Presbyterian Church in 1854," but unquestionably the World's Fair held in Crystal Palace during 1853 had much

to do with them. For this first international exposition held in America, a "house of glass," modeled after the Crystal Palace of London, but much more beautiful as an architectural work, was built. It occupied the plot of ground on Sixth Avenue between Fortieth and Forty-second Streets, now known as Bryant Park. The fair was opened by President Pierce, with many distinguished personages and some twenty thousand people, on July 4, 1853. Subsequently the building was used by the American Institute for its fairs, but was destroyed by fire on October 5, 1858.

Two other circumstances tended to make Madison Square a desirable residential quarter, for we are rapidly approaching the time when among the leaders of fashion in New York, was

"Miss Flora McFlimsey, of Madison Square."

In 1856 a statue was erected to George Washington in Union Square. It was the first of its kind to be set up after the downfall of that of George III in Bowling Green. In the same year a statue and monument were authorized by the Common Council to be raised to the memory of General William J. Worth. This famous military officer was of distinguished New York lineage, and had won fame for himself during the War of 1812, and again in the war with Mexico. He was the first to plant the flag of the United States on the Rio Grande, and he was also the first to enter the City of Mexico, where again with his own hand he cut down the Mexican

flag that waved from the National Palace. Swords were given him by Congress and by the State of New York.

General Worth was a man of tall and commanding figure, and was said to be the best horseman and handsomest man in the army. He died in 1849, of cholera, in San Antonio, the headquarters of the Department of Texas, of which he had been placed in command subsequent to the war. His remains were brought to New York and placed temporarily in Greenwood Cemetery. Finally, on November 23, 1857, they were conveyed to City Hall, where they rested in state for two days. Then, at the time chosen for the inauguration of the memorial, they were escorted by a large military procession and deposited in a vault under the monument in the triangular plot on Fifth Avenue between Twenty-fourth and Twenty-fifth Streets.



Z. T. Worth

This funeral procession was only one of the many that have since marched along the west side of the Square. In 1865 the remains of the martyred Lincoln, escorted by a procession five miles in length, passed by on its mournful journey from Washington

city to Springfield. Less imposing, but of sad interest, was the funeral of Horace Greeley, which on a dull day in November, 1872, passed down Fifth Avenue, attended by the President, the Vice-President, and Chief Justice of the United States, with a great number of public men of both parties. Greatest of all, however, was the procession, led by General Hancock, that escorted the remains of General Grant, the nation's most distinguished military hero, to their last resting place at beautiful Claremont, overlooking the Hudson River. It was the most magnificent spectacle of the kind ever witnessed in this country. Like Napoleon, he desired that his remains might rest in the city of his home and among the people he loved.

“Ye living soldiers of the mighty war,
Once more from roaring cannon and the drums,
And bugles blown at morn, the summons comes :
Forget the halting limb, each wound and scar ;
Once more your captain calls to you :
Come to his last review.”

Finally, all that was mortal of General Sherman—last of the greater heroes of the civil war—was taken from his home in West Seventy-first Street, in February, 1891, and conveyed along the familiar route, which he himself had so often trodden, on its way to the train by which his body was taken to St. Louis, there to be interred by the side of his wife and son.

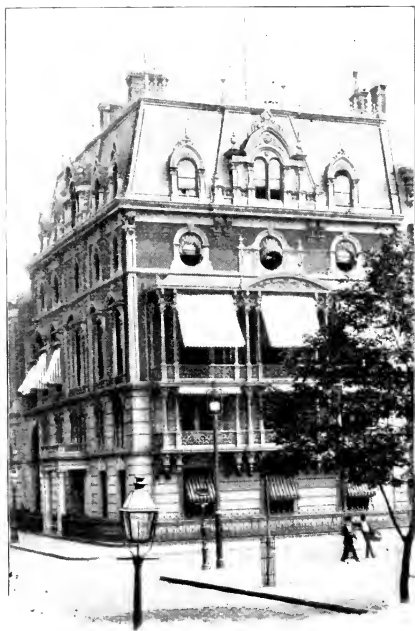
We have wandered somewhat from the strict chronological order of events, and must return. The

Fifth Avenue Hotel, occupying the southwest corner of the Square, was opened to the public in 1859. Franconi's Hippodrome had been torn down to give place for the more pretentious edifice, which took more than two years to build.

Even in this democratic country royalty commands respect, and many royal visitors have been entertained at this hotel. Among these may be mentioned the Prince of Wales, who visited New York in 1860. The learned Dom Pedro, of Brazil, with his empress, had apartments at the Fifth Avenue in 1876. Royalty, however, has constituted but a very small proportion of its many distinguished guests. Presidents of the United States, United States Senators, Congressmen, governors, judges, generals, admirals, ambassadors and others have been received at this famous place.

If we have dallied overlong on the west side, we will make amends by hastening to the north and east sides. These were soon lined with elegant residences of the social leaders of New York city. There was no Ward McAllister in those days to decide as to the precedence of the "Four Hundred" of *ante-bellum* times, but, if any palm was to be given to a leader, then certainly Leonard W. Jerome would have been promptly chosen. He was associated with his elder brother, Addison G. Jerome, and William R. Travers, in the brokerage business. His boldness in Wall Street made him conspicuous. He did nothing by halves, and his entertainments were the town talk of the time. His residence was

on the corner of Twenty-sixth Street and Madison Avenue. The three Misses Jerome were the belles



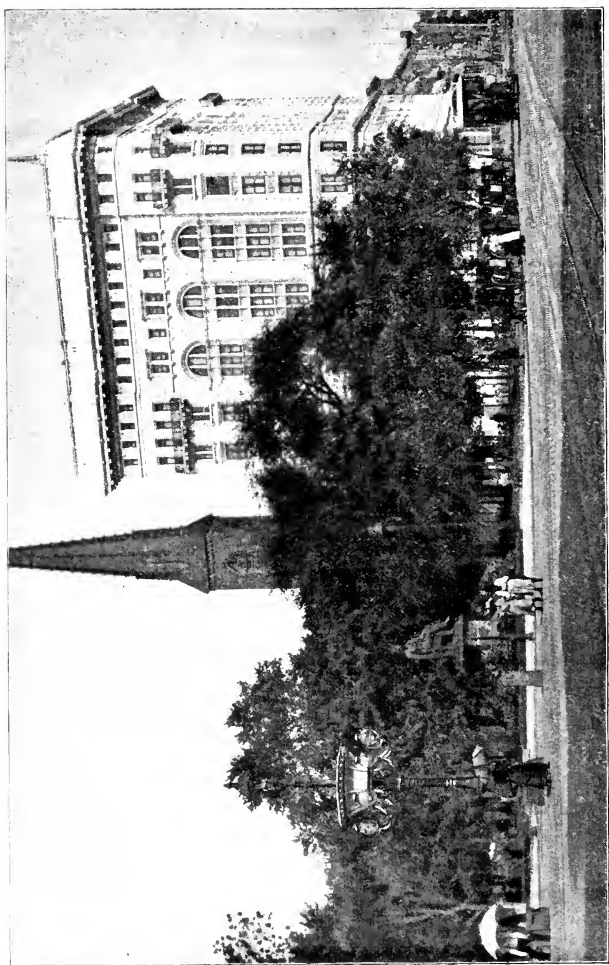
of the period. They married abroad, and one of them became Lady Randolph Churchill.

A younger brother was Lawrence R. Jerome, who was one of the best-known and most popular clubmen of New York and London. It is gossiped that Brander Matthews had him in mind when he drew that charming character of Uncle Larry, who comes

and goes in his pleasant stories of New York. Be this true or not we can not say, but certainly Mr. Jerome was that kind of a man.

On the same side of the Square as the Jerome mansion was the home of William R. Travers, famous as a wit and *raconteur*. He was born in Baltimore, and married a daughter of Reverdy Johnson. In 1853 he came to this city and joined the New York Stock Exchange. Four years later he became associated in business with Leonard W. Jerome, and when the partnership expired each member was supposed to be worth over a million dollars. Mr. Travers continued in business and was successful. He was noted for his lavish generosity, and was prominent in sporting and club circles, being President of the New York Athletic Club at the time of his death. His many stories were in every one's mouth, and an impediment in his speech made them more characteristic. He died in Bermuda in March, 1887, where he had been ordered by his physician. One of his last jokes is well worth preservation. On being asked how he was getting on, he replied: "As well as could be expected," and then, with the inevitable stutter, said: "My physician sent me here for change and rest; and the waiters are getting the change, and the hotel-keepers the rest." Peace be to his ashes, for he was a true gentleman!

On the north side was the residence of Benjamin H. Field (No. 21 East Twenty-sixth Street), who died in 1893. He was well known for his active



connection with many charities. He was one of the incorporators of the Home for Incurables, and for long years its president. The chapel belonging to the home was one of his gifts. Mr. Field was prominent in the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, the Free Circulating Library, the Eye and Ear Infirmary, and other charities. Also, he was an incorporator of the American Museum of Natural History, and in 1886 was President of the New York Historical Society.

Other residents on the north side included the Iselin family, at No. 23, whose long connection with New York society has made them well known. The senior member of the family has been prominently connected with many institutions in a fiduciary capacity. Frank Work, who has not missed his daily ride to Central Park for more than a quarter of a century, and Mrs. Morgan, whose wonderful collection of bric-a-brac, including the unique peach-blow vase, was sold a few years ago, have their homes on the north side. Likewise among the residents on the north side were William and John O'Brien, of the banking firm in Wall Street; one of the elder Schieffelins, of the old drug house of W. H. Schieffelin & Co.; and James Burden, whose iron and steel interests in Troy have made him wealthy. On the corner of Fifth Avenue and Twenty-sixth Street was the home of Dr. John F. Gray, famous as the leading representative of the homœopathic school in the city. His residence subsequent to his death was remodeled and made into the Hotel Brunswick.

On the east side were also the homes of many distinguished citizens. At No. 37 was the residence of James Stokes, for many years an associate of William E. Dodge in the metal firm, best known as Phelps, Dodge & Co. It was the first residence erected on the Square, and was built in 1851, when Mr. Stokes moved from Thirtieth Street and East River (Kip's Bay). He married a daughter of Anson G. Phelps, and died there in 1881. His daughters still occupy the home, but his son, W. E. D. Stokes, has moved up town. Dr. Edmund R. Peaslee, who died in 1878, resided in No. 25. Besides enjoying an extensive practice, he achieved eminence as a specialist, and was at the time of his death Professor of Gynæcology at Bellevue Hospital Medical College. His own profession conferred honors upon him, and he was at one time President of the New York Academy of Medicine. No. 19 was the home of William Laimbeer, Jr., who represented the district in the State Senate during 1864-'65, and was otherwise prominent in political affairs.

On the southeast corner of Twenty-fifth Street and Madison Avenue is one of the earlier family hotels called "The Madison." It was at one time the residence of Peter Ronalds, a connection of the Lorillard family. Mrs. Ronalds had an exquisite voice, and invitations to her musical entertainments were highly prized. In recent years she has lived abroad, chiefly in London, where she is said to have much influence in court circles. On the same block, but at the corner of Twenty-fourth Street, is the house

long occupied by John David Wolfe, who was born in this city in 1792, and lived to be eighty years of age. He was a successful hardware merchant, and acquired a large fortune. Mr. Wolfe was prominent for his activity in organizations having to do with the improvement of the condition of the community. He gave largely to various philanthropic bodies, of many of which he was an officer. Mr. Wolfe married a daughter of Peter Lorillard. He died in New York city in May, 1872.

The active philanthropies of this noble citizen were continued by his daughter, Catharine Lorillard Wolfe, who inherited from her father's and grandfather's estates a well-invested fortune of about \$10,000,000. From the time of the death of her father until her own decease in 1887 it is said that she gave away about \$2,000,000 for religious, educational, and charitable purposes. Grace Church, of which her father was senior warden at the time of his death, and of which she herself was a member, was a favorite object of her bounty. The Chantry, on the south side, and Grace Home, on the north, the grand organ, reredos, and a large stained-glass win-



Catharine L. Wolfe

dow at the back of the transept, were among her more conspicuous gifts.

The drinking fountain at the southeast end of the Square was presented to the city by Miss Wolfe.



It was designed by Miss Emma Stebbins. Her home is now owned by her kinsman, David Wolfe Bishop.

Adjoining the Madison Square Presbyterian Church was a row of brownstone houses, two of which were occupied by prominent New-Yorkers.

No. 3 was the residence of William H. Appleton, now the senior member of the firm of D. Appleton & Co. Mr. Appleton was also prominently connected with the New York Life Insurance Company. He was one of the incorporators of the Century Club, and in other ways identified with many institutions of the metropolis.

On the corner of Madison Avenue and Twenty-third Street was the home of William Lane, who was one of the leading wholesale drygoods dealers of his time. He had an extensive trade in the Southern States, and was ruined by the civil war. Among his guests was Jefferson Davis, who is said to have been entertained by him during his last visit to New York, immediately before the war. Mr. Lane sold his residence to S. M. L. Barlow, who from 1849 till his death in 1889 was one of the successful lawyers in New York. He represented the English stockholders of the Erie Railway in their efforts to oust the Fisk-Gould management in 1871-'72.

Mr. Barlow gave much attention to the gathering of rare and curious books, and his collection of Americana was one of the largest in the country. It was sold at auction subsequent to his death, and realized \$82,000. In addition, he had a rare collection of paintings, statuary, and bric-a-brac.

Mr. Barlow married a daughter of Peter Townsend, whose large smelting works not only yielded him a princely income but made him noteworthy as a successful ironmaster. He lived on the south side of Twenty-third Street, almost opposite the

Square. Another of the daughters became the wife of General Thomas F. Meagher, an Irish-American officer who fought gallantly for the Union in the civil war. James B. Colgate, William Colby, Michael Mahoney and John Scott were well-known residents on the south side.

It must be remembered that Madison Square re-



ceived its recognition as a social center not only from those who were fortunate enough to secure homes within the precincts of the Square, but also from those who resided in its immediate vicinity. In the adjacent streets, both between Madison and Fourth Avenues and Fifth and Sixth Avenues, as well as in Fifth and Madison Avenues, were the homes of many of the first families who contributed much to the social gayety of the period.

With the beginning of the Sixties came the civil war, and New York became an important distribu-

ting center. Recruits were gathered here before being sent to the front. The public parks were turned into camping grounds, and the site of the present Post Office was occupied by wooden barracks. For a time Madison Square had its share of troops, and white tents covered the turf, in front of which sentries paced their weary rounds in anticipation of the time when they should be called upon to do duty along the banks of that river which played so important a part in the great war, and from where the news so often came, "All quiet along the Potomac to-night," to gladden the anxious hearts of those who watched and prayed by the firesides.

We have already referred to the Jerome mansion. It has a history that would require many pages to tell. Leonard W. Jerome was a strong Union man, and subscribed \$35,000 to build a fast cruiser to pursue the Confederate privateer Alabama, and was Treasurer of the Union Defense Committee. It was but natural, therefore, in 1868, when the Union League Club was seeking larger quarters, that it should take his house for its home. This club, organized in 1863 "to discountenance disloyalty to the United States, and for the promotion of good government and the elevation of American citizenship," remained housed in the Jerome mansion until 1881, when it moved to its present quarters, on the corner of Fifth Avenue and Thirty-ninth Streets. Its presidents during this period were John Jay, Jackson S. Schultz, William J. Hoppin, Joseph H. Choate, George Cabot Ward, and Hamilton Fish,

each of whom has been identified with many important interests in this city, while John Jay and Hamilton Fish were called to fill high places in national affairs.

After the removal of the Union League Club, the Turf (during 1881-'82) and Madison (during 1883) Clubs occupied the building, but in 1884 it was leased to the University Club, which had outgrown its quarters in the Caswell House, on the corner of Fifth Avenue and Thirty-fifth Street. Various alterations were made in the building, including the removal of the little theatre which had been the scene of so many charitable and amateur entertainments. It is now used as the dining-room. In this house the University has prospered greatly, and it is now not only one of the foremost clubs in the city, but also the foremost university club in the United States. Its presidents have included Henry H. Anderson, George A. Peters, and the present incumbent, James W. Alexander.

While referring to clubs in connection with the square, mention must be made of the New York Club. This organization, founded in 1845, is next to the Union Club in age. For some years it occupied the house facing Twenty-fifth Street, between Broadway and Fifth Avenue, and directly opposite the Worth Monument; but as this building is all breadth and no depth, it was unsatisfactory for club purposes, and was abandoned in 1887 for its present home on the corner of Fifth Avenue and Thirty-fifth Street, being the Caswell House remodeled,

which was occupied for so many years by the University Club.

This Madison Square Bank building, as it has been recently styled, has filled many purposes during its existence. Originally the home of the Haight family, it became in time the Worth House, a hotel; but its defects of construction made it undesirable. Then it was used for business purposes, and Carlton, the publisher, moved his salesroom there from under the Fifth Avenue Hotel. The New York Club then occupied it, while more recently the unfortunate Madison Square Bank used it for offices. In the upper floors were the editorial and publication rooms of The Cosmopolitan Magazine.

Returning to the northeast corner of the Square, space must be afforded for an account of the block bounded by Madison and Fourth Avenues and Twenty-sixth and Twenty-seventh Streets, now occupied by the Madison Square Garden—truly the most beautiful building in New York city. This site was for many years the passenger station of the New York and Harlem Railway. As early as 1831 the Common Council granted that corporation the right to run cars “from the Astor House, along the Park, through Park Row, Centre and Broome Streets, Bowery and Fourth Avenue to Twenty-seventh Street; from there, with large cars, to Harlem River.” The down town route was used for the first line of horse-cars in the city, and the Harlem Railroad was the first steam railway to leave the metropolis. Later the Common Council allowed

the Harlem Railroad to grant permission to the New York and New Haven Railroad to run on their tracks "on that portion of the route of the New York and Harlem Railroad from the corner of Fourth Avenue and Twenty-seventh Street to Harlem River."

Time changes all things, and the modern traveler seeking a train at the Grand Central Station would scarcely recognize the site as that which the New York Mirror once described in the following eloquent words: "We know of nothing in any city in



the Union to compare with the magnificent view that opens upon you when emerging from the upper end of the artificial ravine that has been cloven down some seventy feet through the solid rocks of Mount Prospect." Horses drew the cars from the station to the opening of the tunnel at Thirty-third Street, where the locomotive was attached. This

condition of affairs continued until the opening of the Grand Central Station, in 1871.

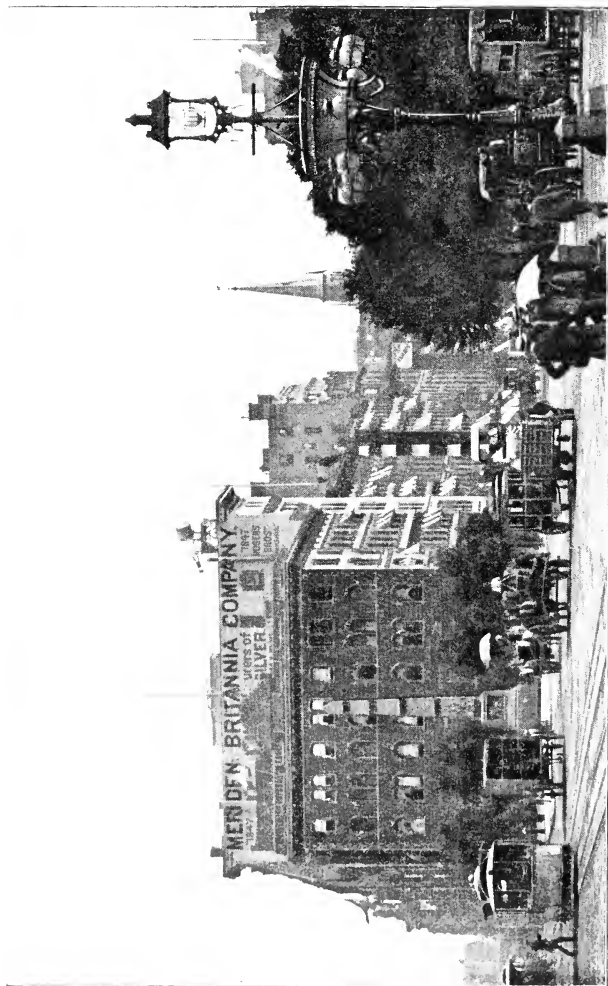
For a time after it was abandoned by the railroads, it remained vacant, but in 1873 P. T. Barnum, the great showman, secured a lease of the property and proposed to carry out his "long-cherished plan of exhibiting a Roman Hippodrome, Zoölogical Institute, Aquaria, and Museum," of unsurpassable extent and magnificence, in which he expected to spend two hundred thousand dollars. For some reason he failed to make the garden a place of permanent amusement, although as the years came and went he was for some weeks a regular visitor to the city, generally presenting his show at this place. In order to protect the tents, brick walls were erected and united by a sort of makeshift roof. This partially covered them.

During the summer months the interior was made to resemble a garden, and tables were arranged on which refreshments were served while various orchestras played. For a time Theodore Thomas wielded his baton here; and then came the military band led by Patrick S. Gilmore, and the place was called Gilmore's Garden. A recent writer says of it: "Dog shows and chicken shows, horse shows and industrial exhibitions, also claimed shelter in the queer, casually developed barrack, finding accommodation nowhere else, but finding it more and more uncomfortable here as their importance steadily increased." It must not be forgotten that the great revival exercises conducted by Moody and

Sankey were held here, after their return from Europe in 1875.

The old buildings were torn down in 1889, and gave place to the present superb structure, which is said to be the largest building in America devoted entirely to amusements. It is four hundred and sixty-five feet long and two hundred feet wide, and its walls rise to a height of sixty-five feet. Its most characteristic architectural feature is undoubtedly its famous tower, that extends skyward with its lines unbroken for two hundred and forty-nine feet, while to the top of the figure of Diana, which, poised in mid-air, serving as a vane, is nearly a hundred feet higher. As is well known, this tower is derived from the Giralda in Seville, Spain, but is not a copy, as commonly claimed.

The cost of the building was about \$3,000,000, and it was opened by a concert on the evening of June 6, 1890. Eduard Strauss, the Viennese conductor, was the leader, while the second part of the entertainment included as attractions two grand ballets. On that occasion seventeen thousand people were present. Horse shows, dog shows, flower shows, and poultry shows have since been annually held within its walls. During the week of May 2-7, 1892, the Actors' Fund Fair was held in it. The entire floor was laid out as a miniature village of one street in the midst of a plain. The buildings were models of famous theaters of ancient London and older New York, and the architecture and picturesque local coloring of several centuries and of



places far distant from each other were cleverly brought into harmony. Very nearly \$200,000 was netted for the fund on this occasion.

In the same month Adelina Patti sang here to three of the largest audiences ever assembled at concerts; and during May, 1894, a music festival was held, at which Materna, Emma Juch, and other distinguished soloists took part. Madison Square Garden has also been the scene of conspicuous social functions, the greatest of which was the ball given at the close of the celebrations held in New York in honor of the discovery of America by Columbus, on April 27, 1893.

The resources for entertainment of the Madison Square Garden are by no means exhausted with its amphitheater. It has a concert hall, in which, to quote again from Mrs. Van Rensselaer's article on The Madison Square Garden, "traditions of famous masters and famous performers are quickly gathering within its walls, and for lecture purposes it is also often in request." The Garden Theatre, which occupies the northwest corner of the building, is one of the most artistic of New York's smaller and newer theatres. It was opened on September 27, 1890, with the production of the farcical comedy of *Dr. Bill*. The roof garden, which is on the Madison Avenue side, is devoted to vaudeville performances during the summer months. It was opened on May 30, 1892, when an audience of nearly four thousand persons was present. Then, finally, there is the view from the top of the tower. It can not

be described. To fully appreciate it one must go and see it.

We return to the west side, in order to briefly mention several of the larger buildings there. The Albemarle Hotel, on the corner of Twenty-fourth Street and Broadway, is a hostelry of long standing, and was built early in the Sixties. The ground that it occupies was formerly used as a stone-yard. Within a few years it has passed into the control of the Hoffman House Company, a corporation managing the Hoffman House, which is adjoining, and extending to Twenty-fifth Street, with an annex on that street. This hotel was opened to the public in 1864. It stands on the property of the Hoffman estate, of which the Rev. Eugene A. Hoffman, Dean of the General Theological Seminary of the Protestant Episcopal Church on Chelsea Square, is the chief owner. It is something of a political headquarters, and in recent years has become to the leaders of the Democratic party what the Fifth Avenue Hotel is to the leaders of the Republican party. At the close of the last presidential election the returns of one faction were received at the Hoffman House, and those of the other at the Fifth Avenue Hotel; while on the transparency high above the Square, on the building forming the triangle between Fifth Avenue and Broadway on the south end, were given impartially all the returns to the assembled thousands below. For more than thirty years this junction has been the place where the election returns were

published, and to see it on the night of an election is one of the sights of New York.

But we have not finished with the Hoffman House. The bar on the lower floor of the Twenty-fourth Street side is famous as an art gallery. Among the works specially conspicuous are Bouguereau's *Nymphs and Satyrs*; *Narcissus*, by Correggio; *Holy Mother*, by Demonceaux; *Russian Mail Carrier*, by Chelmonski; *Boudoir of an Eastern Princess*, by Étienne; also Ball's statue of *Eve*, in marble; Schlesinger's *Pan and Bacchante*, in bronze; and *The Egg-Dancer*, a fine piece of old bronze. At certain hours of the day arrangements are made for the admission of ladies. The Bartholdi Hotel, on the southwest corner of Broadway and Twenty-third Street, is the latest of the hotels that are at the south end of the Square.

In 1870 Madison Square was placed under the care and control of the Department of Public Parks as now organized, and in December of that year the plan for its present arrangement was adopted. For a time it was surrounded by an iron railing, but the appearance was not satisfactory, and it was transferred to Bryant Park, on Sixth Avenue. Since that time the Square has continued to improve, and no pleasanter spot can be found in the city than this attractive little park on an afternoon in the late spring or early autumn.

One of the features of the Square—for he must so be regarded—is George Francis Train, who for years has made his way daily from his home in the

Ashland House, or more recently the Continental Hotel, to some shady nook under the trees, where he reads his papers and plays with the children, with whom he is a great favorite. For some years Mr. Train refused to hold conversation with any one, but in spite of his eccentricities the little ones are fond of him; and a man whom the children love must surely be a good-hearted man.

A conspicuous addition to the Square was made in 1876, when a colossal statue of William H. Seward, representing the statesman as seated in a senatorial chair of Renaissance character, one hand holding a scroll and the other hanging over the arm and holding a pen, was given to the city by a number of admirers of the great war Secretary

of State. The sculptor was Randolph Rogers, and the result can not be claimed to be an artistic success, for Mr. Seward was a man "all head and no



legs," whereas the statue represents the statesman with legs of unusual length and prominence. It is at the southwest corner of the Square, facing Broadway, and was unveiled on September 27, 1876. The orator of the day was William M. Evarts, who, like Seward, had been Senator and Secretary of State of the United States. He said :



"Great was he in intellectual ability, great in moral qualities, great in the opportunities which served him, great in the perils which he encountered, great in the triumph of his politics, and great in the prosperity of his statesmanship. And if the policy upon which he acted was wise and conspicuous, all nations could behold it, all nations could judge of it ; and he is great in his fame, which is now secured alike against discordant opinions in his lifetime and against posthumous detraction."

By general consent, one of the finest examples of contemporaneous American art in sculpture is the statue of Admiral Farragut, in the northwest cor-

ner of Madison Square, by Augustus St. Gaudens. The admiral is represented as standing, with his legs slightly apart, in a sailor's attitude, as if on deck. Marine glasses are in his hand, and the skirt of his coat is thrown back, as if blown by the wind. The pedestal, which is equally a work of art, was designed by Stanford White. It is formed as a bench with a tall back, in a shallow, circular shape. It was unveiled on May 26, 1881, and presented to the city by Secretary of Navy William M. Hunt, on behalf of the Farragut Memorial Association. At the moment of its presentation, John H. Knowles, the sailor who lashed Farragut to the mast in the battle of Mobile Bay, assisted by J. B. Millner, who was also on the flagship Hartford, drew aside the drapings from the statue; and B. S. Osborne, the sailor who hoisted the colors of the flagship as she entered the engagement, displayed an admiral's flag on a pole at the corner of the stand, which served as a signal for an admiral's salute of seventeen guns. Joseph H. Choate was the orator, and his address began with—

“The fame of naval heroes has always captivated and charmed the imagination of men. The romance of the sea that hangs about them, their picturesque and dramatic achievements, the deadly perils that surround them, their loyalty to the flag that floats over them, their triumphs snatched from the jaws of defeat, and deaths in the hour of victory, inspire a warmer enthusiasm and a livelier sympathy than are awarded to equal deeds on land. We come together to-day to recall the memory and to crown the statue of one of the dearest of these idols of man-

kind—of one who has done more for us than all combined—of one whose name will ever stir like a trumpet the hearts of his grateful countrymen.”

The last of the statues erected in Madison Square was raised to one of New York's favorite sons.

From 1867 to 1881

Roscoe Conkling represented the Empire State in the United States Senate. He then retired from public life and resumed his career as a lawyer, settling in this city. His services were at once secured by several corporations, and his practice be-

came an extremely lucrative one.

In the great blizzard of March 12, 1888, unable to obtain satisfactory conveyance, he walked from his office up

town and was lost in Madison Square, where he was res-

cued by friends. The effects of this exposure, added to those of a cold previously contracted, caused a serious illness which resulted in the formation of an abscess at the base of the brain. It terminated



fatally six weeks later, and the brilliant statesman was gathered to his fathers.

His many friends subscribed for a memorial statue of him, which now marks the site at the south-east corner of the Square, where he was overcome by the blizzard. It is of bronze, and represents the orator standing erect as if addressing one of the many audiences that were gathered to hear the convincing tones of his remarkable eloquence. The artist was John Q. A. Ward, of New York, and the statue was unveiled without ceremony on December 3, 1893.

We have elsewhere in this sketch made mention of the sad processions that have passed along the west side of the Square, but that side has also been the scene of gayety. The reviewing stand of all processions is commonly erected on the triangle on which the Worth Monument stands. From here many of the annual reviews of the National Guard have been seen; great political processions, in which if the party organs tell the truth, each faction by actual count had a greater number of persons in line than the other, have been reviewed by the leading candidates of each party. The three days' almost continuous parade by which the centennial anniversary of the inauguration of George Washington was celebrated on April 29, 1889, was reviewed from here by President Harrison. The pageants by which the four hundredth anniversary of the discovery of America was celebrated on October 12, 1892, passed by here; as did the parade on April 29, 1893, forming

the beginning of the events that culminated in the opening of the World's Fair in Chicago.

Nor should we forget to tell how for many years our City Fathers, remembering, perhaps, that they had once been boys, had compassion on the youth of the city, and yearly on the night of the Fourth of July set off municipal fireworks in the public squares, and especially in Madison Square.

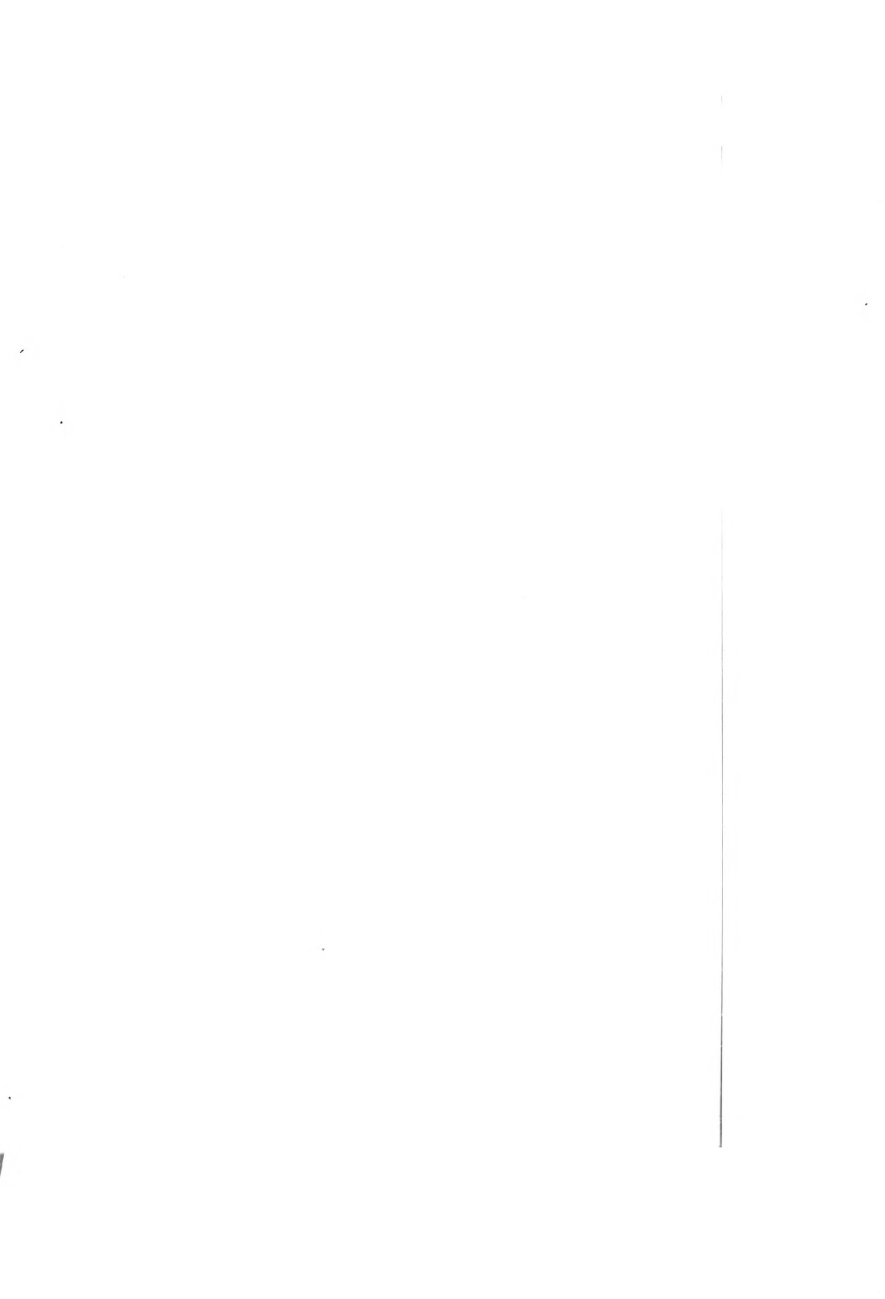
On the corner of Twenty-sixth Street and Fifth Avenue stands the Hotel Brunswick, a house frequented largely by English tourists, and also noted for its restaurant, which is much resorted to for suppers after the theaters are out. From in front of its doors the parades of the Coaching Club have started, and in its dining hall they have held their annual banquets. The "Tally-ho," pioneer of coaches, driven by the genial Delancey Kane, who is connected by marriage with the Iselins, made its first start from in front of the Brunswick almost twenty years ago.

Diagonally opposite, also facing Fifth Avenue, is Delmonico's restaurant. It needs mention, but hardly description. A recent writer speaks of it as "the most famous restaurant in the United States"; but is there a place in the world where civilized man eats in a civilized fashion that has not heard of Delmonico's? It followed the fashionable world up town a score of years ago, and became at once "the place" for public social functions. What memories are conjured up at the simple mention of the word "Delmonico's"! At the Patriarchs' balls

the belles of the season make their *débuts*. There they attend the dancing classes and cotillions. In turn, as matrons they act the chaperone for the never-ending succession of belles that come and go. Finally, as devotees of charity they serve as managers of the bazaars that are held there for some fashionable and worthy benevolence. It has been the meeting place of many social and other organizations, and conspicuously so of the well-known Sorosis, the women's club. The youth of the period congregate in the *café* on the Broadway side, and Del.'s is their favorite lounge.

We have made the rounds of the Square, and have discussed its historical, its social, and its commercial features. This little book is the result of many months' careful research, and is issued by the Meriden Britannia Company, which is the last to make Madison Square its home. At the door of their new salesrooms we bid our reader farewell.





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